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SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. French clearing operations may have upset Viet Minh plans:

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French headquarters in Indochina believes that current clearing operations and the partial interdiction of Viet Minh attempts to infiltrate the Tonkin delta have upset the over-all Viet Minh campaign plan.

The delivery of Chinese Communist aid, currently estimated by the French at 500 tons a month, has been rendered increasingly difficult by the bombing of supply routes and a shortage of coolie labor.

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The estimated Chinese aid contrasts with 1,000 tons a month believed to have been delivered last winter.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

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4. Change in Egyptian Regency Council emphasizes army's strength:

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General Nagib's removal of Colonel Mohanna from the Egyptian Regency Council is considered by Ambassador Caffery to be a sign of the strength of the army's inner circle.

The Embassy points out that Mohanna did not belong to the military group which planned the 23 July coup, and that he was selected for the Regency Council only because of his high reputation as an army officer.

Caffery adds that some sources in Egypt believe that Mohanna represented the Moslem Brotherhood and that his dismissal may be connected with army efforts to curb the Brotherhood's influence.

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Comment: Nagib's summary dismissal of Colonel Mohanna and the resignation of Mohammad Barakat remove the two strongest men from the three-man Regency Council, further evidence that the army is steadily consolidating its position. Prince Moneim, the provisional regent, can be expected to be completely docile.

5. Communist-front party will run candidates in Greek elections:

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The Communist-dominated EDA Party announced on 12 October that its efforts to cooperate with other parties had failed, and that consequently it will run its own candidates throughout Greece in the approaching elections. The announcement added that the door was still open for cooperation.

Comment: The strength of Marshal Papagos' rightist Greek Rally and the left-center EPEK-Liberal coalition is nearly equal, and it is difficult to predict the outcome of the elections.

Although EDA leaders recently stated that Prime Minister Plastiras' EPEK could not blackmail them into joining an electoral coalition, they are presumably aware of the advantages which the reiteration of their independent status gives them in extracting concessions from EPEK.


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WESTERN EUROPE

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7. Prospects for Belgian ratification of EDC treaty worsen:

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 The American Embassy in Brussels believes that the Belgian Government may be expected to grow even more timid about ratification of the EDC treaty as a consequence of its unexpectedly heavy defeat in the 12 October communal elections. The Embassy notes that the opposition Socialist Party may prefer to let the weak Social Christian (Catholic) government remain in power for the next few months to bear the onus of sponsoring taxes for support of the new budget.

Comment: Just before the elections, Foreign Minister Van Zeeland indicated that because of the government's slim parliamentary majority and widespread doubts on EDC, the arrangements for voting on the EDC treaty would have to be made carefully.

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8. Italian leaders to block opposition to EDC at Socialist Conference:

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Italian Democratic Socialist leaders Saragat and Lombardo have promised to make every effort to prevent use of the forthcoming International Socialist Conference at Milan to retard EDC ratification.

Saragat doubts that a call for four-power talks on Germany would carry at the conference. The American Embassy in Rome has emphasized to both men that any resolution bearing on German unity should be premised on free elections.

Comment: At the recent Democratic Socialist congress, Saragat was elected secretary general and his right-wing groups won 12 of the 21 seats on the directorate. Lombardo represented Italy at the EDC treaty negotiations.

The West German Social Democrats are expected to propose at Milan a resolution in favor of four-power talks. Such talks would inevitably delay ratification of the EDC treaty.

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